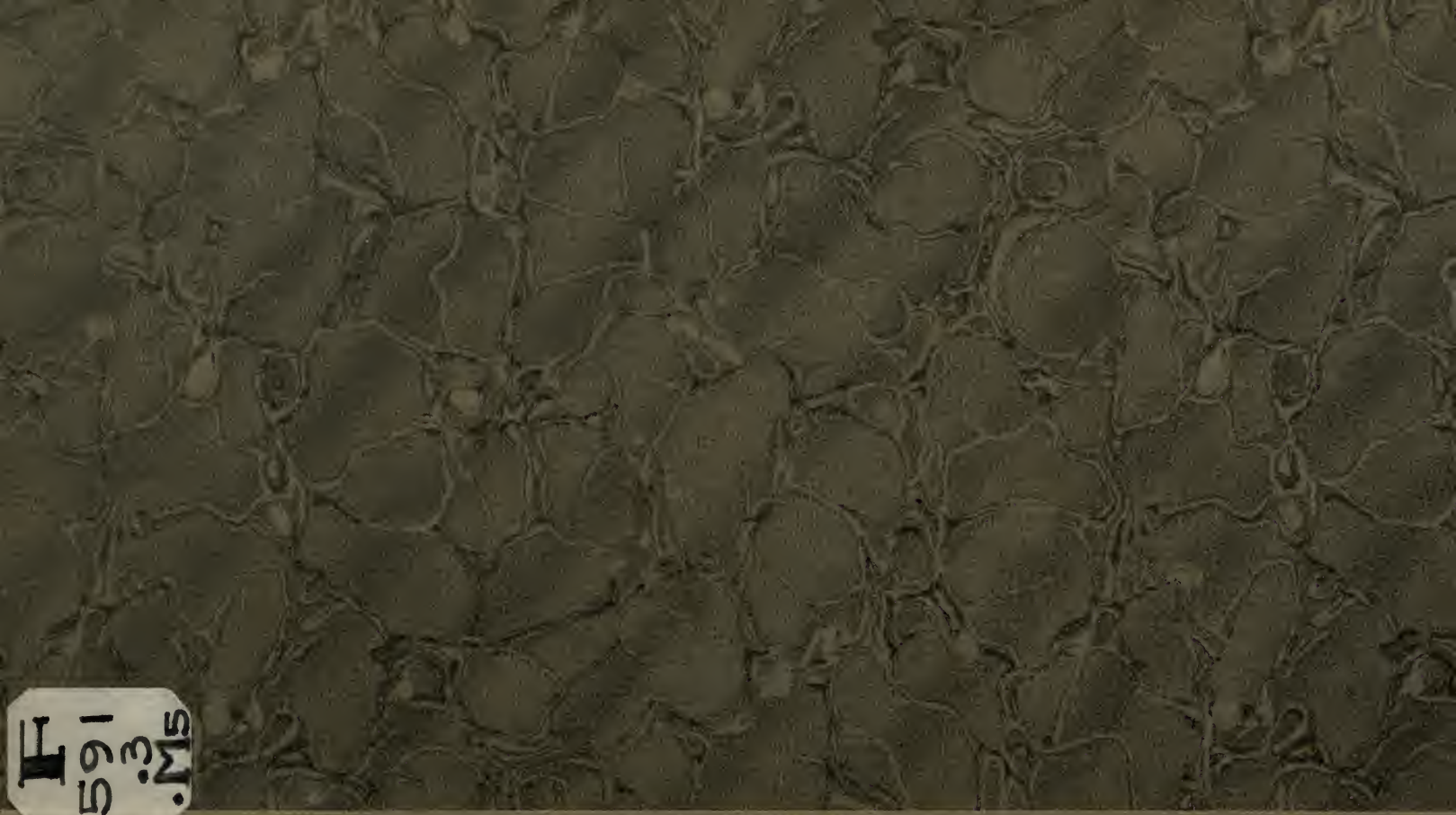

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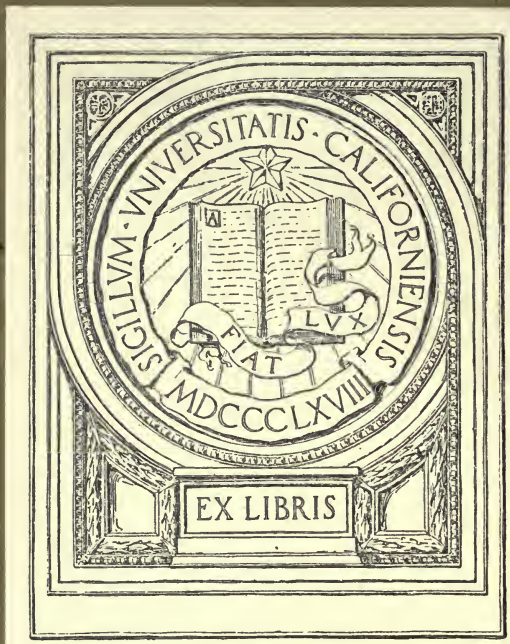

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Rocky Mountains.

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Annals of the Propagation of the Faith
Vol. 30

1869.

generation. It has often been said at Mauritius, that in a few years the population of this ancient Isle of France, of this pearl of the Indian Ocean, will be altogether Indian. Wise men tremble at the prospect of a transformation like this rapidly going on. What will become of us, what will become of religion in such a struggle with paganism? Let us do under these circumstances, Gentlemen, what the Church formerly did on the arrival of the barbarians on European soil: let us convert the pagan masses. And then far from absorbing the Christian community which has flung open to them the gates of those hospitable lands, they will more than ever throw themselves into its arms and form one people, under the powerful influence of Him to whom has been given the empire of the world.

"I remain, Gentlemen, etc.,

✠ Michael Ad. Hankinson.

Bishop of Port Louis."

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MISSIONS

OF

AMERICA.

ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

The Missions established amongst the savages on both sides of the Rocky Mountains, and confided to the Fathers of the Society of Jesus (province of Turin), are six in number:—1st, in the centre, the Mission of the Sacred Heart amongst the Awl-Hearts and the Spokanes;—2nd, to the north, the Mission of Saint Ignatius, amongst the Hanging-Ears, the Kalispelu and the Contonnais;—3rd, to the east, the Mission of Saint Mary, amongst the Flat-Heads;—4th, to the south-east, the Mission of Saint Peter, amongst the Black-Feet;— 5th, to the north-east, the Mission of the Immaculate Conception, amongst the Scoïelpi; 6th, lastly, the Mission of Saint Joseph, near Lewiston, amongst the Pierced-Noses.

1. *Mission of the Sacred Heart* (1).—"Founded about twenty-five years ago," the Rev. Father Urban Grassi,

(1) "We have placed this Mission under the invocation of the Heart of Jesus," we read in a letter of the Rev. Father Giorda, "in contradistinction to the name of these savages, Awl-Hearts. Before they got the faith, these savages were as barbarous as the other nations around them. This name is, therefore, an eternal monument to the Heart of Jesus, by the victory it has obtained in transforming them interiorly into *children of adoption*

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Superior of the Missions of the Rocky Mountains, writes, the 15th November, 1868, "the Mission of the Sacred Heart encountered almost insurmountable difficulties. At present, it is the most important of all; there you see reanimated the proverbial piety of the first Christians. Whoever has given public scandal must expiate it in public, and reconcile himself with his tribe, previous to reconciling himself with God by confession. Last winter, the head chief got drunk; whiskey is a terrible temptation to the Indian. A subordinate chief, of an energetic character, called on ten or twelve warriors to inflict punishment on the sinner. They found the chief in a state conscious of his crime, but he was too weak to say, 'I have sinned.' He excused himself by saying that he had drunk, with the view of hindering by his presence a greater disorder. A young man then made a long speech to him, and proved, all the while paying him the greatest respect, that one never should do evil that good might come of it. The chief submitted. He was going to be flogged. But when they saw his son, tears flowing from his eyes, assisting at the spectacle, all felt moved. They untied the victim, whom they decided to have been sufficiently punished by the humiliation.

"On every Saturday, almost all our Christians fast, and their fasts are much severer than ours. They eat only once, and that towards evening. Some go beyond the bounds of prudence, prolonging, unknown to us, their fasts for two or three days. Some flog themselves with branches of thorns; others wear, for whole days, the chain with iron spikes on it. The spirit of mortification is most prevalent during the novenas previous to the great feasts. They then go to the Missioner, and ask him about the penitential exercises they can perform.

"The tribe of the Awl-Hearts consists of about four hundred individuals, scattered over a territory of 200 square miles, in the region of Idaho, which forms the vicariate-apostolic of Monsignor Lootens. The country is fertile, and for hunting and fishing cannot be excelled. A number

of our Indians have small fields where they grow corn and potatoes for their support; they are very skilful in cultivating the land.

"The great religious days are the occasions when they hold their meeting. All then approach the sacraments; afterwards, when they have partaken of a repast which the Father has prepared for them, they separate. Many remain in the neighbourhood, especially in winter; almost all spend there the Lent and the novenas preparatory to the solemnities. In spring, they assemble for the principal harvest. This year we have built a small chapel at the place. Father Caruana has written to me about this: 'The plain of Gramast is truly a terrestrial paradise. One while, it is morning prayer murmured by every mouth and in every hut, at the moment of awaking; another time, it is the song of the canticles which awakes the echoes of the neighbouring mountains. When the bell rings for the *Angelus* or the *De profundis*, the good Indians on their knees in their huts recite those prayers.'

"We will open this year an Indian school, and I hope to get permission to print a catechism in the savage language, which will be of great service in instructing our Indians, even when they are wandering about in search of food. In conclusion, I give a table of the spiritual results of this year:—5,080 confessions;—3,800 communions;—4 adult baptisms;—35 baptisms of infants;—6 marriages."

Two Missioners have charge of the station of the Sacred Heart.

II. *Mission of Saint Ignatius.*—It extends over fifty square miles, in the territory of Montana, and consists of five hundred souls. It employs two Fathers, one of them passes the greater portion of his time in the valley of Hellgate, where are Indians of four or five different tribes, and a great number of whites. Saint Ignatius has a house of the Sisters of Charity, called here, some years ago, to educate the Indian girls. At the same time, metisses and white girls are also received in the school.

Confessions and communions are not so numerous as amongst the Awl-Hearts. But, if we reflect on the difficulty in following these nomad tribes, we will feel surprised at the Missioners preserving their courage. To-day in one place, to-morrow gone, and God knows where.

III. *Mission of Saint Mary.*—This Mission, where two Fathers and a Brother are employed, contains about four hundred and fifty Indians, all Catholics, and comprises an extent 60 miles long by 40 broad. Like the preceding one, it is under the jurisdiction of Monsignor Lootens, Vicar-Apostolic of Idaho.

This Mission, which was the first founded in this country, and formerly very flourishing, fell into such decay, fifteen years ago, that the Superiors thought it fitting to abandon it. Nevertheless, a Father came there from Saint Ignatius, 60 miles distant, once or twice a year, to catechize, baptize, bless their marriages, etc. Things remained in this state till 1866, an epoch when, thanks to the indefatigable perseverance of the Rev. Father Grazo, the Mission could be resumed. He met with great obstacles, but his zeal triumphed over them all. The Flat-Heads are beginning to value the sacrifices of their holy and courageous Missioner, and to testify to him a sincere attachment.

IV. *Mission of Saint Peter.*—"The Mission of Saint Peter," writes the Rev. Father Grassi, "included in the territory of Montana, occupies a space of 500 miles long by 100 broad, on this side of the English possessions. The tribes which inhabit it are the Bloods, the Piham, the Si-sizem, the Great-Bellies, and the Black-Feet, in all 12,000 souls. Five or six Fathers are fully employed there, for the nations have no fixed residence. The waters of the torrents supply them with drink, the buffaloes with food. The first they find everywhere, and they hunt the second wherever they go. Their life is entirely nomadic. The only means to instruct these Indians is to accompany them on their hunting expeditions.

"During the ten years that the Fathers have been estab-

lished amongst the Black-Feet, their efforts have had scarcely any result, and this was because they wished to constrain them to build houses and settle themselves in a fixed place, where the government could establish an agency. Whilst following our Indians, we would be able to have a house and a church in the most important post at Benton, where many half-Indian families reside, and where the Missioner would be constantly in connexion with all the Black-Feet of the tribe.

"One of our Fathers passed a part of the winter at an encampment of the Voods; here I found him teaching catechism to fifty children, boys and girls; this he did twice a-day. Unfortunately, his strength was not equal to the ardour of his zeal. Two of our most robust Fathers have sought permission to cultivate this virgin land so promising in appearance. They will be sent there as soon as possible.

"There is no security for real and durable success apparent in the Missions to the country of the Black-Feet; the principal reasons for this are as follows. The country, lying under the 40th degree of north latitude, is cold and unfit for cultivation; the land produces nothing but a short herbage known by the name of buffalo-grass. Then the Black-Feet hardly differ from wolves in their mode of life; like them they hunt the buffaloes in troops, and feed on them when caught. All savages are naturally careless and indolent; but the Black-Feet are more so than any others, because they can live with less labour. Finally, polygamy reigns amongst them in all its deformity, and its roots run so deep that it is worthy of the gravest consideration. In fact, the more wives a savage has, the richer he is, for in this way he possesses a large number of slaves to serve him and to make him fine clothes. In this way, to ask them to give up their wives, is to require of them to go back to poverty and contempt.

"The Black-Feet are divided into numerous camps, each of 300 to 400 huts. The walls of these Indian palaces are formed of from twenty to thirty buffalo-skins, on which are

painted in grotesque figures the deeds of arms of the heroes of the family. These mighty achievements consist in plundering the enemy of his horses, and of all sorts of cruelties practised on him. Round the hut or on the top of it, float the banners of the brave, that is to say, the scalps of long black hair they have torn from their victims. In the post of honour in the hut or over the door-way, during the day time, hangs the calumet of medicine (in their superstitious language), adorned with ribbons and shells in the savage way. It is a sort of divinity which they always consult in important affairs, and which their chief always brings with him to war. Round the camp, during the day, thousands of horses feed; at night, these are tied up to stakes ranged in the form of a cross.

"When the evening has come, then commences the military music; the drum, the favourite instrument of savages, is beaten in the tents of the warriors, the gamblers, and the sick. It is accompanied by songs or rather by howlings so monotonous, that the ear is stunned. The neighing of horses and barking of many hundreds of dogs take a part in the concert. It is in the midst of this infernal uproar, which would kill any sick man except he was a savage, that the medicine-man administers the remedies to the patients.

"In dangerous places, above all when traces of the enemy are met with, a sentinel watches all night around the camp, to guard against surprise. To know how to deceive the vigilance of the sentinel, to get, by creeping, into the camp, to cut the cords which tether the finest horses, to drive these out from the midst of the others, and to fly away with them without being perceived, such is the daring which immortalizes an Indian warrior. In this kind of plundering, the robbers of these countries are not at all inferior to the cleverest rascals of London or Paris.

"When food is scarce in the camp, at day-break, the young men and the warriors arm themselves with javelins and guns, mount their finest coursers, and dart after the herd of buffaloes. In less than an hour, a hundred and

more of these animals lie dead on the ground. This ends the work of the hunters, and then begins the labour of the women who have followed them. They first skin the buffaloes before the breath is out of their body; this they do with surprising quickness and dexterity. They then cut the animal into pieces, putting the finest parts on their horses, and return to the camp. The remainder is spoil for the wolves who, during the operation, are there watching their prey and howling around. As soon as the meat arrives in the camp, the pot is put on the fire in every tent, and then commences a great feast, which lasts till the provisions are exhausted.

"Such are two of the principal occupations of the Black-Feet.

"A third is war, war which consists in plundering and killing their enemies. At the present time, every one, whites as well as Indians, are enemies of the Black-Feet. This ferocious people are in hostility with all the nations surrounding them; and the latter, although occasionally enemies to each other, agree in one respect, at least, to carry extermination into the country of the Black-Feet; so that this territory is, as it were, a perpetual field of battle, or rather of atrocities of every kind. It is the refuge of outcasts who have become brigands; and woe to him they find on their road.

"It is to these ferocious men that the Missioner must bring the name of Jesus Christ. Nothing is impossible to God; but you can understand, such a work, beyond all others, surpasses the power of man. No real good can be done for the Indians, if a settled and durable peace be not established amongst the different nations, between themselves first, and then between them and the whites. With this view, the government has arranged military posts along the Missouri and the Indian frontiers. They support their agents in these, and send every year peaceful commissaries to distribute presents amongst the savages. Already the Sioux, the Great-Bellies, the Crows, and all the nation of

the Bloods have signed a treaty with the whites; but it has been impossible as yet to pacify the Indians towards each other. We ourselves, Missioners, could not induce our converted savages, the Flat-Heads and the Hanging-Ears, to stop from making war on their neighbours beyond the Rocky Mountains, so deep is the passion for war rooted in the soul of the savage. These fratricidal contests are the chief cause of the frightful diminution of these hordes, and will eventually annihilate them."

V. *Mission of the Immaculate Conception.*—"This Mission includes five different nations: the Scoïelpi, the Senecas, the Kalispeln, the Flat-Bows, and the Contonnais, that is to say, 3,000 souls. Part of them belong to the territory of Washington, and are under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Nesqualy, Monsignor Blanchet; the remainder, included in the English territory, taken from Monsignor Herbomez, Vicar-Apostolic of British Colombia. All these Indians are Catholics. Two Fathers share the fatigues of the Mission, but the extent of the territory (about 500 miles) does not allow them to obtain the results they desire. We fail in resources, and yet how much good remains still to be done! We must form a new Mission here for the Contonnais, who number about 2,000, speaking a language of their own. For more than twenty years these tribes have been asking for Fathers; and such is their docility, they give us greater consolation than all the neighbouring hordes. The Mission of Colville could, in this way, extend its influence over the surrounding tribes, such as the Simpoyihi, and three or four small Spokane tribes, almost entirely abandoned for want of Missioners."

VI. *Mission of Saint Joseph.*—"The Pierced-Noses, amongst whom this Mission is established, are more than 3,000 in number. It is included in the vicariate-apostolic of Monsignor Lootens. Already the enemy has sowed tares in this portion of the field of the Lord. Thus Father Cataldo could not induce the Indians to receive him. He counted on fixing himself in the midst of them, on the

occasion of the opening of a school which the government wished to establish, but this establishment was part of a treaty which the Pierced-Noses refused to accept. Four of their chiefs were called on last year by the government to terminate this affair. During that time, Father Cataldo looked out for opportunities to go amongst them. He was able to succeed many times during the winter. But he was obliged to give up his project; for the great chief forbade him to be allowed to enter, and threatened him with death if he set foot in his camp. The year has thus passed over for the Missioner in fear and in hope.

"The time of grace seems, however, not to be far off. 'To-day,' Father Cataldo writes to me, dated 4th November, 1868, 'I was visited in my chamber by fifteen savages, amongst whom were six chiefs, five of them on our side. If I can get leave to build a chapel in one of their camps, I will do so without delay, should I have to borrow the required sum.' It is true that the agent of the government has entrusted the direction of the school to one of his friends. I had expected this; but it will not hinder us from remaining amongst the Pierced-Noses as Missioners. The agent, questioned by Father Cataldo, said that no religion was prohibited, and that the government would protect all forms of worship.

"You see we are not here without hope. But of what avail are the single efforts of Father Cataldo? Six more Fathers will be necessary. Nominally we are 15 Missioners; in reality, there are but 6 or 7, all the rest being sick, or succumbing under the weight of years."

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith

Vol. 34 1873

MISSIONS

OF

AMERICA.

ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

A Missioner whose name is well known to the Associates of the Propagation of the Faith, and gloriously connected with the history of the conversion of the native tribes of North America, the Rev. Father de Smet, of the Society of Jesus, died at St. Louis, on the 23rd of May, 1873, in the seventy-third year of his age and the forty-sixth of his apostolic life.

The Rev. Father Peter John de Smet was born at Termonde (Belgium) on the 31st of January, 1801. He began his studies in the college of Alost and the Seminary of Malines. In the month of July, 1821, he left Holland for Philadelphia, in company with the Rev. Charles Nerinckx, Belgian Missioner at Kentucky.

Immediately on his arrival in the United States, he entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus at Georgetown (diocese of Baltimore). Having been ordained Priest in 1827, he was sent to different Missions: St. Charles, Portage of the Sioux, Dardenas, St. Ferdinand, etc. In these places he laboured during three years. At this period, the Society of Jesus was

occupied with the foundation of the University of St. Louis. Father de Smet returned to Europe about the affairs of the Society, and at the same time with the hope of reëstablishing his health. Some years after, he went back to America, and devoted himself altogether to the Missions of the native tribes. Until the day of his death, his labours in this field were never interrupted, except when he returned occasionally to Belgium, to look for Missioners.

So great was the authority exercised over the Indians by Father de Smet, that the Presidents of the Union sent him on several occasions, in an official capacity, to establish peace with the revolted Indians. The courageous Missioner willingly undertook the task of peaceful intervention; for it was the only means of arresting, for a time, the American authorities in their system of extermination.

Since his return to the United States, last year, the Rev. Father de Smet, whose health had been impaired by nearly fifty years of missionary work, found his strength completely fail him. In the month of February, 1873, he had a fit of apoplexy. At last, on the 23rd of May, he surrendered his soul to God.

The funeral took place at St. Louis, and was attended by a crowd of Catholics and Protestants, who vied with one another in rendering homage to the apostle of the Indians. Among those present were the Archbishop of St. Louis and several generals of the American army.

The remains of Father de Smet were transported to the novitiate of Florissant, where they repose beside those of his first companions, the Rev. Fathers Verghagen, Elet, and Smidts (1).

We shall now proceed to give some letters containing edifying accounts of the wild tribes scattered through the Rocky Mountains, and evangelized by the Rev. Father de Smet.

(1) The *Annals* have published twenty-six letters from the Rev. Father de Smet: vol. vii (1834), French edition;—English edition: vol. ii; vol. iii; vol. iv; vol. vi; vol. vii; vol. viii; vol. xi; vol. xiii; vol. xxi. The *Catholic Missions* have published three: vol. iv (1871–72), p. 668, 669, 681.

I. *Cœurs-d'alène* (Idaho Territory). — The Rev. Father Cataldo writes, in April, 1872, to the Rev. Father de Smet:

"Our Indians, indolent enough by nature, are, nevertheless, deeply penetrated with gratitude for the benefits already bestowed on them, as well as for those you still continue to confer on them. This letter may be considered theirs rather than mine. The day before yesterday, Easter Sunday, all the chiefs of the tribe held an assembly in the chief place of the Mission, and resolved to send a *haïminen* (letter) to the Rev. Father de Smet, the first black-robe they had ever seen. After the meeting, one of them was deputed to call and beg of me to address a haïminen to the black-robe de Smet in their name, testifying their gratitude for the kindness he had shown them and for all his benefits, and adding an earnest prayer that he would come once more to see them. In reply to the deputation, I said that I would gladly comply with their request to write the letter of thanks, but that I thought it would be very difficult to obtain the second part of the request.

"'Black-robe de Smet,' I said, 'is now far advanced in years, and he would find it difficult to accomplish long journeys on horseback.'

"They saw that I was right on the latter point, but added: 'If the Father is not able to come to visit us, he will at any rate be glad to hear that the *Cœurs-d'alène* have the most affectionate and grateful recollection of him.'

"I can, therefore, assure you, my dear Rev. Father, that you have every reason to rejoice in having been the founder of this Mission; for these 'poor Indians,' as they often like to style themselves, are so pious and truly moral in their conduct, that it is not easy to form an idea of their goodness without being actually among them.

"Yesterday, Easter Monday, before returning to their different encampments to cultivate their little fields, they made known to me their intention of returning to the Mission towards the end of the month, to take part in the usual devotions of the month of Mary. And I am quite sure they will keep their word as they did last year.

"On Easter Sunday, all our Indians, without a single exception, approached the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. I doubt if there is another nation or tribe on the face of the earth of which such high praise could be given. The morality of family life, which, I must say, is more or less irregular in many of the neighbouring tribes, and, perhaps, still more so among the white population of these new territories, is, I repeat, extremely edifying in the case of our dear neophytes, and excites the wonder of all who have any communication with these Indians. The chiefs of the different clans of the tribe publicly express their satisfaction on this subject, and, in fact, there is only one exception to this happy state of things.

"The principal chiefs, Seltis and Vincent, recommend themselves in a special manner to your prayers, and Vincent, especially, asks your intercession for the soul of his beloved son Ernest, whom he lately lost. In fine, I conclude this letter, Rev. Father, by entreating for myself and my two fellow-Missioners, Fathers Joset and Gazzoli, a memento in the holy sacrifice of the Mass."

II. *Pierced-noses* (Idaho Territory). — The Rev. Father Guidi wrote to us on the 3rd of October, 1872, the following letter:

"What I am now going to relate is taken from an account written by the Rev. Father Cataldo to the Rev. Father Provincial of Turin.

"I must premise that our Fathers have undertaken during many years past to labour among the tribe of Pierced-noses.

"In the month of January, 1869, Father Cataldo succeeded in building a chapel in one of the Indian encampments, and gathered some children into it.

"The following year he erected another chapel in an encampment near Lewiston, and there he had an opportunity of teaching the prayers, and a little of the catechism to some young men.

"Nevertheless, but little progress was made. During his three years' residence among the Pierced noses, and after much

labour and suffering, Father Cataldo had only converted a very small number, and baptized but five or six of the Indians. Such being the case, his superiors seeing but little fruit produced, and being in want of Missioners for other quarters, thought it well to recall Father Cataldo, and send him among the Cœurs-d'alène.

"During the summer and autumn of last year, the same Father visited the Pierced-noses, and obtained nothing but fair words and fine promises, though a very extraordinary thing happened while he was with them. This was the baptism of a young girl who was dying, and who recovered her health after having received the sacrament of regeneration. Some months later, she fell ill again, and died a happy death.

"About a month after her death, some of the Indian chiefs, being assembled in council, resolved to send in search of Father Cataldo, and accordingly did so. It was then autumn. The Superior, Rev. Father Giorda, to whom Father Cataldo had written for leave, was not able to send an answer in the winter season. His departure was thus delayed till spring.

"Meanwhile, the old Presbyterian minister Spalding arrived at the government agency, near the settlement of the Pierced-noses, the government having already given up the agency and schools to the Presbyterians. Naturally we fancied that all was now over with us, and nothing remained to be done but to confide these poor Indians to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to pray a great deal for them.

"However, towards the end of April, Father Cataldo repaired to the Pierced-noses, and on the 27th April, he arrived safely at Lewiston. But what a change had taken place! The Indians came running from all parts. Those who had at first seemed cold and indifferent, now came from a distance to see the Missioner, welcome him on his arrival, and lament his long absence.

"Next day, Sunday, the 28th, contrary to all expectation, a number of Indians went to hear Mass in the church of Lewiston, which was unable to contain half the crowd.

"After Mass and a sermon preached to the blacks, the

chief assembled the Indians in the church, the Missioner began the prayers in the language of the Pierced-noses, and, wonder of wonders! all the good savages began with a loud voice to repeat the prayers which the Father had previously taught to a few children. He then gave an instruction on the necessity of baptism, and he ended by promising to say a Mass for them before the Holy Sacrifice should be offered for the whites.

"The whites themselves, astounded by so numerous and so unexpected a gathering, called upon the Fathers to rejoice with him and congratulate him on the progress of our holy religion.

"But I have something still more extraordinary to tell you. On leaving the church, the Indians went in search of the Father, each having much to say, and many histories to relate.

"'Black-robe,' said one, 'why did you not come in the autumn? I was very nearly led away by the old minister, who told me you were sure never to come back any more.'

"'And I, Black-robe,' said another, 'went to the minister, and he told me that you would not return. I did not like to die without baptism, and I had myself baptized by him; but I always said the Catholic prayers, and declared that I would always remain a Catholic.'

"'Ah! Black-robe,' continued a third, 'it was all your fault. You did not come, and my son became a Protestant and married a Protestant wife; but I hope that both will become Catholics now that you are here. You must remain with us for ever and ever. If you ever leave us again, it will be all over with us.'

"'And I,' went on a chief, 'have always held on firmly; the minister Spalding, the agent of the government, and his father, also a minister and the interpreter of the agency, tormented me all the spring to become a Protestant. All of them, even the agent (fine chiefs the government places over us, fine liars!) told me that you would never return, and that the president of Washington had given orders that the whole population should become Presbyterians.

" 'I replied that these were all lies, that you would certainly return in spring, that you could not possibly come through snow up to a man's middle in depth, that the President left all his subjects at liberty to be either Catholics or Presbyterians, that I never would abandon my religion, that I had long been a Catholic, although I had never been baptized.'

" 'Black-robe,' said another Indian, 'my son has been baptized by the Protestant minister; but he is still a Catholic. Will you not give him a medal? The minister did not give him one.'

" On the 4th of May, a great number of the chiefs assembled in the presence of the Father, and decided that, this time, they would say the truth, and be instructed and baptized.

" On Sunday, the 5th of May, about a hundred of the Indians repaired to the church of Lewiston, to the great astonishment of the whites, heard Mass with devotion, listened to the instruction, and were present at the benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament.

" The Father began on the 10th of May to instruct the Indians encamped with their families on the other side of the river. The instruction lasted from morning till evening. On this occasion, too, the Father was greatly astonished to find that young men and old knew their prayers equally well. Who could have taught them? Who, indeed, but a few good boys and girls.

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" In fine, on this occasion, Father Cataldo baptized seventy-eight persons, married fourteen couples, and had the consolation of numbering among the Pierced-noses ninety-seven baptized Catholics, including the eight baptized by the Protestant minister, who have always remained Catholics.

" He had, moreover, the pleasure of learning that the *tambouriniers* (sun-worshippers) had assembled in council, for the purpose of deciding whether they should or should not become Christians. Many of the chiefs were for the affirmative, and they only differed among one another on the question of time and opportunity. They intimated to the

Father that, if they were converted, they would become Catholics. Let us beg of God to give them the power to do so, as He has given them the desire.

"I shall, in conclusion, give you an account of the wonderful conversion of an old chief named Abraham Uyaskasit.

"'Towards evening, on the 12th of May, there came,' wrote Father Cataldo, 'a messenger to tell us that a new-born infant was on the point of death in a place about a mile distant. I called the chief Uyaskasit, and told him to accompany me, for I should probably arrive in time to baptize the child.

"'Uyaskasit was one of those who always remained indifferent, and, indeed, I might almost say, opposed to our holy religion, during my sojourn among the Pierced-noses. He seldom assisted at prayers, or if he did, it was out of condescension to his daughter, to give her pleasure and to hear her sing, rather than from any religious motive. I, therefore, had very little hope of his conversion.

"'Turning to me, as we journeyed along, he said,

"'Well, Black-robe, what is going to be done?'

"'In regard to what?'

"'In regard to me. I have two wives, and I do not know which I ought to send away. I will do whatever you tell me. Listen to what I am going to say.

"'These two women are sisters, children of the same father and mother, and they are very much attached to one another. They are excellent women, and very fond of me. I love them both equally well. Each of them has children, and both are willing to remain with me till death. I will send away whichever you tell me. But remember they belong to a family of *tambouriniers*, living in a place where there are no other church and prayers but the tambourine and fire-water.

"'I will put away one of my wives, but it will break one half of my heart to do so. And this is nothing in comparison with the children. What is to become of their souls? The children will follow their mother, and lose their religion, their prayers, and their souls.

"'But I repeat, Black-robe, I am ready to do whatever

you tell me. I want to be a Christian. But to put away one of my wives and leave her in my hut! Oh, how the whole tribe will talk about it! And, what is more terrible than the talk of the tribe, is my own poor heart.

" 'As I told you before, I am extremely fond of them, and if I must repudiate one, she will have to go.

" 'Black-robe, save my soul, but do not let the souls of my children and my wife be lost.'

" 'I doubted for a moment the sincerity of this conversion; but I soon became convinced that Abraham was really converted. I thanked God, and prayed to be enlightened as to what I should do.

" 'My dear Abraham,' I said to him, 'you shall not bear your name in vain; you shall be a second Abraham. I thank God for your conversion, and I trust that all things shall be arranged so as to secure the salvation of your souls.

" 'In the evening we shall call together the chiefs, and deliberate on the course to be pursued.'

" 'By this time we had arrived at the house where the child lay dying. I baptized the infant, and returned to Abraham's hut, my heart rejoicing, because another soul had been gained to God.

" 'The chiefs held their meeting, and after some discussion, decided that Abraham should keep his first wife, and put away the younger, for whom he should construct a separate hut at some distance, in which she and her children should live at his expense.

" 'Poor old Abraham made great objections to this. I related to him the story of the vocation and sacrifice of Abraham, and explained how he could now imitate the holy patriarch, etc.

" 'Abraham struggled against himself. But, as it was now midnight, the council broke up, and adjourned to the next day.

" 'On the 13th of May, after morning prayer, instruction, and breakfast, the council of the chiefs assembled again. One of them conceived the happy idea of sending for the woman who was to be repudiated. But the latter returned for answer

that, as the sentence had been pronounced, it would be of no use to open the discussion again.

" 'Another chief went out, and succeeded in bringing the woman, followed by a crowd of Indians, curious to see how the thing would end.

" 'Being informed of her presence, I turned towards Abraham, and, repeating my discourse of the previous evening, exhorted him to make the sacrifice, etc.

" 'Abraham had already made up his mind to conquer his inclinations; he stood up and tried to speak, but his feelings overcame him, and he sat down covering his face with his hands.

" 'All present were deeply affected, and the woman no less than the rest.

" 'After a few moments' silence, Abraham, at my instigation, rose up again, dried his eyes, and began to relate the history of the patriarch Abraham, and cite it as an example for himself to follow.

" 'He spoke with such eloquence and emotion, that every one began to cry.

" 'As soon as he had come to a conclusion, the woman spoke in her turn:

" 'Yes, I am repudiated, and I shall go away. But whither shall I go? Shall I return to my parents, to lose my own soul and the soul of my son, who now is so fond of prayer?'

" 'No,' I replied; 'I shall never allow you to go away and endanger your salvation. You shall remain here, and lead a Christian life. Abraham will give you a hut and the means of livelihood.'

" 'It is impossible,' she replied, 'that I should stay here repudiated. I will go back to my parents, and when you come, Black-robe, to build a church there, I will go and live near with my son.'

" 'I then told her that I did not know when I should be able to build a church in that place, and that, besides, her parents would have long before perverted her. I conjured

her not to aggravate poor Abraham's distress, telling her that it would be a great consolation to him to see her resigned and living like a good Christian, and that her present resolution if carried out would grieve poor Abraham, displease the Black-robe and the other chiefs, and afflict the hearts of Jesus and Mary. I besought her in the name of all, in the name of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, to yield to my entreaties. She submitted at once, and ended by saying,

" 'I am quite ready now to do whatever God requires of me. I have been very wicked. I now promise to live like a good Christian. To-morrow I will bring my little son, and beg of you, Black-robe, to baptize him and me, and I will do whatever you tell me.'

" 'And with the grace of God all this was done.'

" So far the Rev. Father Cataldo's account.

" And what are we to conclude from all this? Assuredly the finger of God is manifest in such events. And yet this well-disposed nation must be left without a Missioner, because Priests are not to be had. Oh! let us pray the Master of the harvest to send labourers into His vineyard, and to furnish the means, without which no Mission can long continue to subsist."

III. *Kootonais.*—The Rev. Father U. Grassi addressed to us the following letter dated Altanam (territory of Washington), December 14th, 1872.

" The Kootonais are divided into three tribes. The first inhabits the United States territory;—the second passes the winter in the British territory and returns towards the South in summer, to lay in a provision of roots, and cultivate some fields situated for the most part below the frontier;—the third never leaves the British territory. The first, which I was charged to visit some years ago, is 26 leagues distant from my residence at St. Ignatius, the second is 47 leagues, and the third 100 leagues.

" As for the two first tribes, it is hardly possible to have them visited by a Missioner more than twice a year, considering the distance separating them from us and the difficulty of

travelling in the mountainous countries. It is only in August and November, that is to say on their return from the territory of the Black-feet, where they go buffalo-hunting every year, that the Missioner can hope to meet them. The first time I visited them, I took the road about the middle of October, in company with another Father and a guide. The latter, however, proving to be inexperienced, we lost our way very soon after our departure. Having wandered a day and a night trying to discover the right road, we arrived in a state of exhaustion from hunger and fatigue at a camp of Kalispels, where we were surprised to find how far we had strayed from the path. I was obliged to return to our residence and make another attempt the following week. This time I was more fortunate.

"I perceived on my arrival among the first tribe, that it was expected the Missioner would be able to remain a whole week with them; but it was quite impossible to satisfy the poor Indians in this respect. Desiring to visit the second tribe without any delay, I spent only two days instructing the first, and then set out again, under the escort of an excellent inferior chief of the tribe I was so long in search of.

"Already, a tolerably thick fall of snow covered certain parts of the road. But if I had something to suffer on the journey, I found unmixed joy awaiting me when I approached and entered the camp. A Kootonais having met us at a distance of more than three leagues from the encampment of his tribe, as he was on his way to the chase, saluted the Missioner, and retracing his steps with all expedition, announced my approaching arrival. The chief Michael, a venerable and patriarchal old man, loved and respected by all his tribe, came to meet me. I was conversing with the good chief when a discharge of fire-arms was heard; this I knew was a token of rejoicing, and it continued until I found myself in the midst of the huts.

"We found all the Indians drawn up in a double line in the centre of the village, waiting to shake hands with the Missioner; which ceremony assumes with them a religious

character, beginning and ending with the sign of the cross. I experienced the greatest consolation all the time of my sojourn among them; their simplicity, modesty, docility, and affection charmed me. I should have liked to spend the winter among them, but this time I had no more than four days to devote to them. On the feast of St. Francis Xavier, I said Mass for them the last time previous to my departure.

"Just as I was about to leave, I saw such a quantity of dried buffalo meat in our hut, that it occurred to me to delay our departure a few hours and boil this supply of provisions to make a great feast for the children. Fifty-five children partook of the repast, and there was enough left to bring some home to their families. They would not let me go until I was completely wrapped up in a buffalo skin, and thus protected from the cold.

"In the month of August the following year, I paid another visit to the same tribe. It was then I learnt that the third tribe of Kootonais had, on hearing of my last visit to the second tribe, sent among them four or five of their people, to get instruction and afterwards return to their forsaken tribe, and communicate as much as they could retain of the teachings of religion. Having had such proof of ardent zeal, I should not have desired anything more earnestly than to take my way to this same third tribe; but there were too many obstacles to such a course. I was of necessity compelled to renounce the realization of my very natural desires; and I returned to our residence at Saint Ignatius, grieved at not being able this time to visit the most abandoned of the Kootonais, and knowing not when I should be able to come to their aid with my ministry.

"Towards the end of October, the same year, a person in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company being about to go to the second tribe of the Kootonais, I offered to accompany him. I found only a few families at the camp of Michael, where I was not expected until the summer of the following year. My companion was ready to return after three days. I assembled the Indians for prayers, explained to them

how much I desired to see the third tribe, declaring, at the same time, that if I had found more anxiety on their part to second my efforts, I might have been able to make this much-desired visit in the month of August, and asking them who would have to answer for such of the unfortunate tribe as should die without baptism, while I, who would have been ready to act the part of the good Samaritan in their regard, was not able to do so, etc. Death-like silence reigned among my audience while I pronounced my discourse, and confusion was visible on every countenance. The last prayer ended, and the last moment having come, I was about to leave my cabin when one of the men, taking hold of the skirt of my soutane, made me sit down, and addressed me in the following terms:

"'It never entered into our heads to prevent you visiting the other tribe; and, if we have been the cause of your not visiting them in the month of August last, you will now find us ready to make reparation.'

"'The season is now too far advanced,' I replied; 'there is half a foot of snow on the ground.'

"'You need not be afraid of that,' added another; 'this sort of snow soon disappears.'

"'But I have nothing with me but my horse.'

"'I am going to give you another horse,' replied a third; 'and, as for provisions, you need not be at all uneasy on that account.'

"I saw that they took the matter quite seriously. However, I hesitated; for I could hardly see how it could be possible to undertake so long a journey and return to Saint Ignatius before the middle of winter, I put forward another objection.

"'But that tribe is not expecting me at this season. It is probably dispersed for the winter hunting.'

"'Hasten your departure,' said the man who had first spoken, 'and you will find them together; for they will not disperse until the caravan of the Hudson's Bay Company passes through their camp.'

" 'Well, then, I am ready.'

" I then went to inform my companion, the *employé* of the Hudson's Bay Company previously referred to. He pronounced my conduct imprudent, and represented to me that my return after this new visit, even if possible, would certainly be destitute of the assistance and comfort I should find if I were now to return with him, and give up the idea of penetrating any farther. My resolution, however, was taken, and I trusted that God would give me the necessary strength to accomplish the good work. With joyful heart I set out with my two Indian guides.

" On the third day, we met the caravan of which my good savages had spoken, and, although I was fortunate in meeting an agent of the Company, who gave me a supply of sugar, coffee, and other little things which the Indians could not provide, my mind was in a state of anxiety lest we should not find our distant tribe; for we had still a day and a half to travel. At last we reached our destination; but, from the summit of a hill, where it is easy to descry the Kootonais' camp, we perceived that there was only a single cabin standing on the spot. And even the family it belonged to was actually on the point of setting out. Two hours later, we should not have found a soul in the camp. The question then was how we should find our Indians. Woods surrounded the camp on all sides. My guides made the air reëcho with their cries, and one of them ran on to hold back the one family that remained on the ground. On my arrival, I found they had prepared a hut for me. Then they set off in search of those who had last of all left the camp. We had not arrived till the afternoon, and before evening we had succeeded in bringing back twelve families. Next morning, by the time I was awake, the whole tribe, with the exception of a single family, were assembled again. How delighted I was to see all the beaming faces around me!

" The young people, of twenty years and under, had never in their life seen a Black-robe; not one Missioner had penetrated, they told me, as far as this tribe since the Rev. Father

Smet passed through, more than twenty years before. I thought at first that I should be obliged to begin from the beginning, and teach them to make the sign of the cross: I was mistaken, however. Judging from the manner in which they followed me as I said the prayers, I concluded that the exercise was quite familiar to them. Moreover, they knew the principal mysteries of our holy Faith so well, that, after three days' work, I had the consolation of baptizing 260 adults and blessing forty marriages. Here, too, in spite of the pressing invitations of the poor Indians, my stay was short. Having marked out a spot on which they could build a chapel, I quitted them on the evening of the third day to return to Saint Ignatius, but not without promising to come back the following year. And, in truth, I kept my word. I found they had built a nice little chapel, where, within four walls formed of trunks of trees laid one upon another, we were able more comfortably to go through our religious exercises. This time, I spent an entire week among them, and promised that in future they should receive a visit from the Missioner every year.

"After this second visit to the third tribe of the Kootonais, all the members of the second expected likewise that I should go to administer the sacraments to them. Then it was that I was witness of the extraordinary endurance of the Indian. After they had all come to confession, I saw a man approach with tottering steps, whom I had never expected to see in the chapel. This man had, four or five days before, been endeavouring to kill a bear, but had only succeeded in wounding the animal. It was impossible to escape the fury of the ferocious beast, which, rushing on its victim, eat away his nose, tore his cheeks and the fleshy parts of his body, severely injured his head, and left him in a fearfully mangled condition. The other Indians ran to the scene of slaughter, thinking the poor man must be dead; brought him to his hut, and carefully bound up his wounds. Hearing of my arrival, he had himself brought to the camp, and after a short rest, came up unassisted to make his confession like the rest.